

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested. The Specification has been amended to correct obvious typographical errors. Support for the amendments may be found in the drawings. Claims 1-5 and 7 have been amended. Claims 9-17 have been added. Support for the amendments and the new claims may be found throughout the specification, for example at page 7, line 20 to page 9 line 12 and at page 12 line 23 to page 13 line 18. No new matter has been added. Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-17, as amended, will be pending.

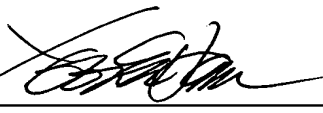
Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,271,040 to Buechler. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Buechler fails to teach each and every element of the present invention. Specifically, Buechler does not teach a side connecting channel which connects at least two stop valves. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Therefore, all objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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